

IN THE CLAIMS:

A complete listing of the claims is set forth below. Please amend the claims as follows:

1. **(Canceled)**
2. **(Currently Amended)** The system of Claim 1, 32, wherein the one or more databases comprise seller databases associated with a particular seller.
3. **(Currently Amended)** The system of Claim 1, 32, wherein the one or more databases comprise a shared data repository.
4. **(Currently Amended)** The system of Claim 1, 32, wherein the data comprise one or more product attribute values, seller attribute values, and product descriptions for each of the one or more products.
5. **(Canceled)**
6. **(Canceled)**
7. **(Currently Amended)** The system of Claim 6, 32, wherein the pattern comprises a particular set of non-printable ASCII characters appearing after each instance of a particular group of characters in the data.
8. **(Currently Amended)** The system of Claim 1, 32, wherein the pattern comprises a plurality of insertion, deletions, or modifications of printable American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) characters in the data according to a pre-defined arrangement.

9. **(Currently Amended)** The system of Claim 8, 32, wherein the pattern comprises each instance of a particular group of characters in the data being underscored throughout the data.

10. **(Currently Amended)** The system of Claim 4, 32, wherein the software components are collectively further operable to determine a first sum of numerical values of bytes representing the data stored in the one or more databases for later comparison with a second sum of numerical values of bytes representing data from another source to determine whether the data from the other source is a copy of the data from the one or more databases.

11. **(Cancelled)**

12. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 11, 33, wherein the one or more databases comprise seller databases associated with a particular seller.

13. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 11, 33, wherein the one or more databases comprise a shared data repository.

14. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 11, 33, wherein the data comprise one or more product attribute values, seller attribute values, and product descriptions for each of the one or more products.

15. **(Cancelled)**

16. **(Cancelled)**

17. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 16, 33, wherein the pattern comprises a particular set of non-printable ASCII characters appearing after each instance of a particular group of characters in the data.

18. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 11, 33, wherein the pattern comprises a plurality of insertion, deletions, or modifications of printable American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) characters in the data according to a pre-defined arrangement.

19. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 18, 33, wherein the pattern comprises each instance of a particular group of characters in the data being underscored throughout the data.

20. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 11, 33, further comprising determining a first sum of numerical values of bytes representing the data stored in the one or more databases for later comparison with a second sum of numerical values of bytes representing data from another source to determine whether the data from the other source is a copy of the data from the one or more databases.

21. **(Canceled)**

22. **(Currently Amended)** The software of Claim 21, 34, wherein the one or more databases comprise seller databases associated with a particular seller.

23. **(Currently Amended)** The software of Claim 21, 34, wherein the one or more databases comprise a shared data repository.

24. **(Currently Amended)** The software of Claim 21, 34, wherein the data comprise one or more product attribute values, seller attribute values, and product descriptions for each of the one or more products.

25. **(Canceled)**

26. **(Cancelled)**

27. **(Currently Amended)** The software of Claim 26, 34, wherein the pattern comprises a particular set of non-printable ASCII characters appearing after each instance of a particular group of characters in the data.

28. **(Currently Amended)** The software of Claim 24, 34, wherein the pattern comprises a plurality of insertion, deletions, or modifications of printable American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) characters in the data according to a pre-defined arrangement.

29. **(Currently Amended)** The software of Claim 28, 34, wherein the pattern comprises each instance of a particular group of characters in the data being underscored throughout the data.

30. **(Currently Amended)** The software of Claim 24, 34, further operable to determine a first sum of numerical values of bytes representing the data stored in the one or more databases for later comparison with a second sum of numerical values of bytes representing data from another source to determine whether the data from the other source is a copy of the data from the one or more databases.

31. (Currently Amended) A system for watermarking data associated with one or more products, comprising:

means for generating an algorithm for creating a particular pattern in data associated with one or more products available from one or more sellers, the data comprising one or more of product attribute values for each of the one or more products, seller attribute values for each of the one or more products, and product descriptions for each of the one or more products the data being stored in one or more databases accessible to one or more buyer computers for search queries for data associated with certain of the products, the algorithm comprising a sifting function capable of creating the particular pattern in the data for identifying the data and the source without adversely affecting the use of the data, the sifting function is capable of altering printable American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) characters in the data, the pattern comprising a plurality of non-printable ASCII characters inserted throughout the data according to a pre-defined arrangement, the pattern facilitating identification of a copy of the data and not affecting authorized use of the data by the one or more buyer computers or users associated with the buyer computers; and

means for applying the algorithm to the data to create the particular pattern in the data.

32. **(Currently Amended)** A system for watermarking data associated with one or more products, the system comprising one or more software components collectively operable to:

generate an algorithm for creating a particular pattern in data associated with one or more products available from one or more sellers, the data comprising one or more product attribute values, seller attribute values, and product descriptions for each of the one or more products, the data being stored in one or more databases accessible to one or more buyer computers for search queries for data associated with certain of the products, the algorithm comprising a sifting function capable of creating the particular pattern in the data for identifying the data and the source without adversely affecting the use of the data, the sifting function is capable of altering printable American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) characters in the data, the pattern comprising a plurality of non-printable American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) ASCII characters inserted throughout the data according to a pre-defined arrangement, the pattern facilitating identification of a copy of the data and not affecting authorized use of the data by the one or more buyer or users associated with the buyer computers; and

apply the algorithm to the data to create the particular pattern in the data.

33. **(Currently Amended)** A method for watermarking data associated with one or more products, comprising:

generating an algorithm for creating a particular pattern in data associated with one or more products available from one or more sellers, the data comprising one or more product attribute values, seller attribute values, and product descriptions for each of the one or more products, the data being stored in one or more databases accessible to one or more buyers for search queries for data associated with certain of the products, the algorithm comprising a sifting function capable of creating the particular pattern in the data for identifying the data and the source without adversely affecting the use of the data, the sifting function is capable of altering printable American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) characters in the data, the pattern comprising a plurality of non-printable American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) ASCII characters inserted throughout the data according to a pre-defined arrangement, the pattern facilitating identification of a copy of the data and not affecting authorized use of the data by the one or more buyer computers or users associated with the buyer computers; and

applying the algorithm to the data to create the particular pattern in the data.

34. **(Currently Amended)** Software for watermarking data associated with one or more products, the software embodied in a computer-readable medium and when executed operable to:

generate an algorithm for creating a particular pattern in data associated with one or more products available from one or more sellers, the data comprising one or more product attribute values, seller attribute values, and product descriptions for each of the one or more products, the data being stored in one or more databases accessible to one or more buyers for search queries for data associated with certain of the products, the algorithm comprising a sifting function capable of creating the particular pattern in the data for identifying the data and the source without adversely affecting the use of the data, the sifting function is capable of altering printable American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) characters in the data, the pattern comprising a plurality of non-printable American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) ASCII characters inserted throughout the data according to a pre-defined arrangement, the pattern facilitating identification of a copy of the data and not affecting authorized use of the data by the one or more buyer computers or users associated with the buyer computers; and

apply the algorithm to the data to create the particular pattern in the data.